BOOK REVIEWS


This is the successor to *Library furniture and equipment* but it is an entirely new book compiled on different lines. It is little more than a listing under name of manufacturer or agent of goods which are made for, or could be used in, libraries. Details are given of sizes and prices, and sometimes very brief descriptions, of the goods mentioned, and to anyone wishing to buy equipment it will be a useful pointer to much that is available.

The list is divided into twenty-two subject areas such as Atlas stands, Chairs, Desks, Ladders, Miniature offices, Periodical racks, Shelving, Tables (occasional, telephone), Waste paper bins. The coverage is good under most headings but continuous stationery and microfilm storage are somewhat thin, and only one overhead projector is mentioned. In many cases, descriptions of equipment such as for 'Book handling and information retrieval' are inadequate, sometimes terms used are inconsistent (Libbraco shelves are described as having a depth of 8in. but Greswell's a width of 8½in.), and the descriptions on p. 68 'Display pockets and books' are far too brief to give any idea to the uninitiated of the purpose of the items mentioned. One would like to be told the merits of lateral and circular filing compared with other forms and also the space economies of compact shelving. Adequate descriptions of some of the modern forms of shelving might reveal their disadvantages and inadequacies; they would also reveal the advantages of Remploy's *Lundia* shelving. One make of shelving is described as being 'double sided' but it is difficult in the context to determine quite what is meant.

This could not have been an easy book to compile, and these minor blemishes will no doubt be avoided in a subsequent edition.

There are about sixty photographs of libraries which have been equipped in the past two or three years and of particular pieces of equipment—more of the latter would have been an advantage. These photographs add much to the attractiveness and value of the book but there are at least two which illustrate fundamental errors in furniture design.

Lists of main trade names and of manufacturers conclude a very useful and well-produced book.

L.M.H.


This book contains chapters on historical background, input to the system, the store to be searched, and searching methods and output.

Gerald A. Willey.


This extremely useful book was first published in 1950 and has stood the test of the years as a guide for library staffs. Illustrations of the new Hornsey library replace those of the Manor Branch, Sheffield; Miss Charlesworth has revised her chapter on the library services provided for children at Sheffield; and Mr. Robert L. Quinsey's guide to the use of catalogues is included; otherwise this edition is very much the same as the 4th edition of 1963.

L.M.H.


This is a translation based on the German edition of a book originally written in Dutch 'some years ago'. The author has taken the opportunity afforded by the publication of the English edition of adding substantial additions to the text which surveys the bibliographical control of periodicals, serials and other publications, and also the whole field in information retrieval. Each of the nineteen chapters has a list of bibliographical references, but there are relatively few for 1963 and 1964. The MS. was delivered to the translator late in 1965; delays due to the necessity for discussions on terminology and concepts added to the delays normally encountered in translation.

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This guide is intended for librarians and scientists, and includes both librarians and biologists from various specialisations among the contributors. It was prepared as a companion volume to Bottle’s Use of chemical literature, 1962, and to avoid duplication often refers to appropriate sections of the earlier work, though finding the entry for it in this work takes a little thought and cannot be done through the index.

As might be expected from editors working in the fields of physical chemistry and biochemistry, the coverage is excellent for the laboratory biologist, particularly for one on the frontiers of medicine. There are specialist chapters on botanical and zoological material, mainly on the taxonomic side, and on agricultural literature, but apart from some short sections on ecology there is not much help for the field biologist and conservationist, who is of increasing importance these days. Within its scope the volume is comprehensive, critical and well-written; the epilogue, which includes a section on the assessment of scientific papers, is particularly valuable.

Diana Simpkins.


A useful reprinting from books and periodicals of matter written by Americans mostly engaged in the field of information retrieval. There are two exceptions, however: H. G. Wells and Cyril N. Parkinson. Two indexes are provided; one of names and one of subjects.

ALPHABETISATION

The following is taken from The Daily Telegraph, 21st August, 1965:

‘MAKING IT HARDER

A correspondent who read my note on the Directory Inquiries operator who asked what Lord Montagu of Beaulieu’s initials were points out the difficulties of finding peers in the telephone books.

Thus, “Eccles Visc., P.C., K.C.V.O.” comes under Eccles P. and “Hampden Visc. C.M.G.” under Hampden C. Lord Sainsbury is in the L column. So is Earl Cathcart. Lord Morrison, of Tottenham, appears as “Morrison of Tottenham Lord” after “Morrison Mr. and Mrs. Nicholas”.

What the principle, if any, is I have been unable to discover—or why the honour of being a Privy Counsellor or a Companion of St. Michael and St. George should be thought to have something to do with the alphabet.’

LIMERICKS

This indexing Person feels free
To index the sands of the sea.
When they say: It’s in vain;
You must number each grain!
A computer can do it, cries he.

He indexed a book in a dream.
Page numbers all vanished in steam.
Typographical error
O’erwhelmed him with terror,
And he suddenly woke with a scream.

An indexer named Norman Knight
Woke up in a terrible fright;
He’d been slaving all day
Writing slips for poor pay
And forgotten to turn out the light.

BALLAD

O bring to me ten thousand cards
And my brave shoe-box too,
An index I must make to-night
Fast as a man may do.

The author wrote the final words
Full many a month ago;
The printers took their galley sheets,
And printed thereupon.

The galley proofs were all made good,
Sheet by corrected sheet;
And the printers printed yet again,
On pages small and neat.

The publisher summoned his merry, merry men,
And said, There is one thing more.
We must have an index for this book,
As books have had before.

The book is all prepared for press,
The printers are standing by;
So call up an indexer here and now,
And bid his fingers fly.

The merry men called loud and shrill,
And ’twas I that answered soon;
But how shall I make the index right
Before next day at noon?